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COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20231  
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Arthur J. Steiner  
MCDERMOTT, WILL & EMERY  
600 Thirteenth Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20005-3096

Dear Mr. Steiner:

This is in response to your letter received 16 January 2001 inquiring about the status of U.S. patent application 09/242,226 filed 10 February 1999. The application cannot be processed by the U.S. Designated/Elected Office because no international application number was provided. The Office notified applicants of the defect mentioned above in an Office communication of 25 February 1999, a copy of which communication is attached herewith for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Leonard E. Smith  
PCT Legal Examiner  
PCT Legal Office

NNH/LES:hn

Nguyễn Ngọc Hô  
Paralegal Specialist  
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